

585

THE CAUSE
of
THE DUMB PLEADED.

A POEM.

PUBLISHED FOR THE PURPOSE OF
ASSISTING
A DESIGNED INSTITUTION
FOR
THEIR RELIEF.

AND IN THAT DAY SHALL THE DEAF HEAR THE WORDS
OF THE BOOK, AND THE BLIND SHALL SEE OUT OF
OBSCURITY, AND OUT OF DARKNESS. THE MEEK
SHALL INCREASE THEIR JOY IN THE LORD, AND THE
POOR AMONG MEN SHALL REJOICE IN THE HOLY ONE
OF ISRAEL.---ISA. XXIX. 18, 19.

BY THOMAS BECK, *K*
MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL, BURY STREET.

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THE CAUSE

THE DUMB PLEADED

A FORM

A DESIGNED INSTITUTION

THEIR RETURN



PREFACE.

THE following little Poem was sketched out three Years past, at the Request of a Friend, whose Son is in the Situation therein described; but was not then printed, from the Author's Consciousness of it's Insufficiency to answer the Purpose expected from it,—namely, to awaken the public Attention to the forming an Institution for the Education and Provision of such Objects.

But the benevolent Purpose being set on Foot, by the Zeal and Humanity of my Friends, the Rev. Mr. John Townsend of Rotherhithe, and the Rev. Mr. Mason of Bermondsey, it is now published,—with a View to the stirring up Others to assist in an Undertaking, which, to answer it's Intention, requires a liberal Support.

*May all those who enjoy the Use of their Senses, or, who have lived to feel the Want of them, have the Comfort of reflecting, with Job, in their Affliction,—
“ I was Eyes to the Blind, and Feet to the Lame;
I was a Father to the Poor, and searched out the Cause of Sorrow. The Blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the Widow's Heart to sing for Joy.”*

TO THE
PRESIDENT, TREASURER, AND GOVERNORS
of a
SOCIETY,
FORMING AN ASYLUM,
for the
DEAF AND DUMB.

GENTLEMEN,

I Congratulate you on that Benevolence which must gratify your finest Feelings; and which reflects an Honor on that Religion which directs our Attention to the most remote Objects of human Calamity.

Your Compassion extends (and permanently extends, in an annual Subscription) to Persons, at present, too deplorable to know your Intention, or express, if they knew it, their Gratitude.

A human soul, inaccessible to social or religious Information, is, indeed, a melancholy Spectacle. May your Endeavors to free such Spirits from their Darkness, be followed by that Success which Appearances now promise; and, be returned four-fold, in that highest Pleasure, the Sense of doing good, into your own Bosoms.

.....

In this Edition, the Author has the Pleasure of acquainting the Public, that the Design of forming an Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb is so far carried into Effect, that above 350 Subscribers have engaged to support it, and, that above 70l. has been contributed by private Donation; that a convenient House is provided for the Reception of those Objects, situated in the GRANGE ROAD; and that a respectable Tutor is chosen to educate them; and that, in a few Days, a Report will be printed for general Information,

T H E

DEAF and DUMB, &c.

FAR hence, unfeeling sportive thoughts depart,
With Fancy's ev'ry gay ideal form;
But come, soft Pity, thou that melt'st the heart,
And ev'ry generous passion rouse and warm.

II.

Thine impress let these artless numbers bear,
Then ev'n th' unpolish'd line shall freely flow,
Soft, as thy starting sympathetic tear,
Resistless, as thy pangs for other's woe.

III.

When thy kind warmth lights up the mental ray,
The wak'ned soul it's faculties surveys;
Views the fine movements of our well-wrought clay,
Expands with wonder, and exults with praise.

IV.

But, ah! what praise can mortal language suit?
To heav'nly skill, no finite mind can reach;
To grace---that man exalts above the brute,
By reason, and it's ready image, Speech.

v.

Mysterious gift ! that favour'd man affords
 Such intercourse as angels only know ;
 The scope of tongues--the wond'rous force of words,
 Our union---yet division, here below.

vi.

Say, How doth echoing air ideas dress ?
 How doth the list'ning ear those sounds convey ?
 Another's mind on mine itself impress,
 And thought, as quick as thought, itself display ?

vii.

O ! ye, whose open tutor'd ear receives
 The voice of truth, or mirth's enliv'ning sound !
 Who share the sweets that conversation gives,
 And hold communion with the spirits round !

viii.

And ye, who feel your wither'd organs fail,
 And prize, as life, the portion that remains,
 Who closely listen to the half-heard tale,
 And mourn the pleasure, that eludes your pains.

ix.

Turn, where to lasting silence sets condemn'd,
 A brother's soul, unable to express
 The struggling passions that his bosom rend,
 The wishes---fears---or love he would confess.

x.

As a poor prisoner, shackl'd and immur'd
In massy walls, shut from the light of day,
With ev'ry avenue of help secur'd,
Weeps, pines, and mopes, in solitude away.

xi.

So such a soul, inclos'd in such a frame,
Feels all it's pow'rs compress'd, and mourns it's
chain ;
Quench'd is the ardor of the vital flame ;
It pants for light and liberty in vain.

xii.

Perhaps, thus shackled, some superior mind,
Some embryo-artist, labouring deep in thought,
That might have tutor'd, or have sway'd, mankind,
Seems to itself, and nature, fram'd for nought.

xiii.

Ah! think, to you instruction opes her store,
Wisdom invites, and urges to be known ;
You tread the flow'ry paths of classic lore,
Or make the wide events of time your own.

xiv.

You rise and measure magnitudes above ;
You sink, and search the sources of the deep ;
You hear the message of eternal love—
Sweet revelation's sacred fruits you reap.

XV.

But he, within himself, his world contains;
 The means of knowledge from his soul confin'd,
 Himself a riddle to himself remains,
 A grief to friends, a horror * to mankind.

XVI.

Like you, he views the busy tribes around,
 Like you, he hastes where crowds admiring
 throng;
 But lost to him the choirs enliv'ning sound,
 And dumb to him the statesman's fluent tongue.

XVII.

Like you, he scans fair nature's ample scene,
 And to it's author, from his works, aspires;
 But vainly guessing what those wonders mean,
 He blindly gazes—stupidly admires.

XVIII.

Like you, he waits where pious spirits meet,
 To pour united praise, or humble pray'r;
 But lost to him the duty, doctrine sweet,
 And all is mystery, darkness, and despair.

* The author has a friend, whose only son is in the situation described; which is supposed to have arisen from the impression made upon his mother's mind, from seeing a miserable spectacle of this kind frequently pass by her door.

XIX.

Like you, his passions feel their secret fire;
 And envy'd joys domestic, can discern;
 Dwell on the object of his heart's desire,
 But cannot ask, nor hope, for blest return.

XX.

The peopled world he sees on ev'ry side,
 And pants to shew and share a friend's esteem
 But social pleasures are to him deny'd,
 And all the world are *deaf* and *dumb* to him.

XXI.

Oft must he feel (when bitter to be borne)
 The mirth, that mis'ry into mock'ry turns,
 His meaning, gestures, mimick'd but in scorn,
 Or misconceiv'd,—his labour lost he mourns!

XXII.

Shut from the sources industry pursues,
 To aid it's own, or help another's case,
 Small are the circles that confine his views,
 And poor *dependance* circumscribes his place.

XXIII.

Yet hath he, struggling with intense desire,
 A soul that *might* have happiness enjoy'd;
 A head that needful knowledge *might* acquire,
 And hands that *might* be usefully employ'd.

XXIV.

But who shall teach him to exert his pow'rs ?
 What skill shall force the mental barriers strong,
 Or seem to waste in patient toil his hours ;
 Content with little fruit for labour long ?

XXV.

Oh ! who with equal tenderness shall sooth,
 The fears, or follies, of a spirit blind ?
 The quick-rais'd temper wisely know to smooth,
 Or fetter'd reason shew to rule the mind ?

XXVI.

No common patience can perform the task,
 No common bounty can afford relief ;
 His wants, compassion from the *public* ask,
 And plead in silent eloquence of grief.

XXVII.

Here god-like mercy holds her sacred seat,
 And bids her sons rear many a hallow'd pile ;
 Here varied mis'ry finds a sure retreat,
 In ev'ry corner of Britannia's isle.

XXVIII.

The sick have med'cine, and the wounded cure ;
 Provision sooths the sorrows of the blind ;
 Food, home, and rest, await the aged poor,
 And weeping guilt an asylum may find *.

* The Philanthropic Society.

XXIX.

Ev'n Afric's sons, so long oppress'd by pow'r,
 That dealt in blood, and stript their peaceful
 shore,
 Look forward, to the swift approaching hour
 When slav'ry's chains shall gall their hearts no
 more.

XXX.

Clarkson * thy name, some fable bard shall sing,
 And teach his happy countrymen to own,
 In ev'ry clime benevolence may spring,
 And Jew and Gentile, Black and White, are one.

XXXI.

Shall ev'ry want it's ready refuge gain,
 And ev'ry tear be wip'd from ev'ry eye,
 And those be left—unable to complain,
 Silent to live—and ignorant to die ?

XXXII.

Ah, no ! the glorious work is now begun,
 That brings to private mis'ry public aid ;
 The joyful parent's *hope*, beholds his son
 Restor'd to life, who once was worse than dead.

* The Rev. Mr. Clarkson, whose indefatigable labours in
 the cause of humanity, have awakened public inquiry to an
 abominable traffic, and rendered it justly execrated.

XXXIII.

Yes—there are souls, the glory of our land,
Who seek the lowly cottage of distress,
Who deal to hunger with unsparing hand,
And, with a Thornton's* spirit, joy to bless.

XXXIV.

Your liberal hearts doth liberal things devise,
You lay up wealth above this earthy clod;
The syren voice of Lux'ry you despise,
But know the voice of Nature and of God.

XXXV.

Come learn, who list to *pleasure's* call alone,
Or *selfish* make your *int'rest* all your aim,
Who fly the dreadful sound—a human groan,
From *these*—true *wealth*, true *pleasure*, and true
fame.

XXXVI.

True life consists in knowing well to live;
True wisdom is religion understood:
More blessed they who give, than who receive;
More happy they who *do*, than squander, good.

XXXVII.

Lend, lend your hand, assist the great design,
Wide as distress, let circling mercy roll;
Come taste, with those who love and duty join,
That highest bliss—BENEVOLENCE OF SOUL,

* The late John Thornton, Esq; who devoted, every
year, some thousands to charitable purposes.

XXXVIII.

Thus the great author of the law of love,
By his example, taught his flock to feel;
Oft did the DUMB his swift compassion move,
And swift his mighty miracles did heal.

XXXIX.

E'er to your hearts was revelation dear?
E'er from your lips did joyful praises break?
Teach *those* to read the truths they cannot hear;
Teach *those* to think the praise they cannot
speak.

XL.

Untaught the bounds where duty bids us go,
The laws of man---the laws of God *unknown*,
He strays, unconscious, to the gulph of woe,
And his wild passions hurl him dreadful down.

XLI.

Or should his soul, convicted, feel it's guilt,
Should swelling fears within his breast increase?
How shall he learn the blood for sinners spilt,
How shall his conscience hear the voice of peace?

XLII.

When pining sickness, or when torturing pain,
Or wither'd age his feeble frame affails,
When sight grows dim, and ev'ry help is vain,
And the cold grasp of nature's foe prevails;

XLIII.

When---‘ what he is, and whither he must tend ?’
Remains an awful, an uncertain, thing ;
Then, who shall teach his spirit to ascend,
Or, from his soul, extract the monster’s sting ?

XLIV.

If in your hour of suff’ring, or of fear,
You value truth, that drives your doubts away ?
If future hope, or endless joy, appear
Your stable comfort—when all else decay,

XLV.

Then help the DEAF to know the cheering word,
Instruct the DUMB to converse with his God ;
The means your Maker gives, his *poor* afford ;
And pure shall be your joys, and light your rod.

XLVI.

By you assisted, and by Heav’n approv’d,
The great design may spread around the earth,
And many a parent’s load be half remov’d,
And many a youth find life of double worth.

XLVII.

Perhaps, from these, some genius shall aspire,
With living tints, to make the canvass glow ;
Or humble indust’ry, content acquire,
And wield the hammer, or the shuttle throw.

Anticipation views the future scene,
Of grateful numbers rescu'd from despair,
Who taught what duty, what religion, mean,
Pour out for you the incense of their pray'r!

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Of grateful numbers rescued from despair,
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